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SUBJECT: First laboratory-confirmed case of H1N1 in DRC is expatriate worker for U.S. company

1. The first laboratory-confirmed case of H1N1 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC or Congo Kinshasa) has been identified in the southeastern region of Katanga province. The case was an expatriate working for the Tenke-Fungurume Mining Company (DRC affiliate of Freeport-McMoRan Copper & Gold, which merged in 2007 merged with Phelps Dodge), who had recently returned from a business trip in South Africa. The patient was immediately sent to the hospital for treatment, and his condition has improved. The National Influenza Center of the DRC's analyzed 1,583 samples potentially infected with H1N1 by real-time PCR (RT-PCR) in 2009, of which 342 samples were positive for H1N1. August-December 2009 constituted the pandemic period in DRC, and during this time the National Influenza Center received and analyzed 966 samples, 290 of which were positive for H1N1.

2. Non-governmental organizations and the DRC Ministry of Health (MOH) pooled their efforts in order to respond to the outbreak. A meeting of MOH leadership from all member countries of the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC) convened in Kinshasa during the outbreak to discuss strategies for combating H1N1. MOH leadership from member countries reinforced and supported their own national influenza committees in order to control the spread.

3. Embassy Kinshasa is closely following this epidemic. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) based in DRC supported the DRC MOH through financial and technical assistance. The Global Influenza Surveillance Network (GISN) continues monitoring the global circulation of influenza viruses, including pandemic, seasonal and other influenza viruses infecting.

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